CARCLAY

"My Friend Thompson!"

Simon. Eh! Master Barnaby! — Who's that? — Didn't I see a female woman?

Act 1. Scene 1.

"MY FRIEND THOMPSON!"

A FARCE,

In One Act,

BY JAMES M. BARCLAY, ESQ.

Author of A Lesson in Love, &c.

PRINTED FROM THE ACTING COPY, WITH REMARKS, BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL, BY D.—G.

To which are added,

DESCRIPTION OF THE COSTUME,—CAST OF THE CHARACTERS,—ENTRANCES AND EXITS,—RELATIVE POSITIONS OF THE PERFORMERS ON THE STAGE,—AND THE WHOLE OF THE STAGE BUSINESS,

As performed at the

METROPOLITAN MINOR THEATRES.

EMBELLISHED WITH A FINE ENGRAVING,

From a Drawing taken in the Theatre, by Mr. R. Cruikshank.

LONDON:

JOHN CUMBERLAND, 2, CUMBERLAND TERRACE, CAMDEN NEW TOWN.

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REMARKS.

"My Friend Thompson."

This farce exhibits, in a series of whimsical scenes, the perplexities of Mr. Barnaby Buckthorn, the married man. Barnaby is a disciple of that art which is "founded in conjecture, and improved by murder." Having been sent to London on a medical trip by his uncle, Mr. Quince, he had become smitten with a fair milliner—a skull-thatcher, anglice, a maker of straw bonnets, but with no more money in her purse than would buy a dose of salts for a cock-robin. These *liasons*, to which not a soul was supposed to be privy but the man in the moon, had not escaped the Argus-eye of a magnanimous fine-drawer, who emphatically swore by his goose "vot" never flies, that his sister should instantly become Mrs. Buckthorn; and Barnaby, being in no humour to provoke six feet four, and a proportionate cudgel, became a Benedick. Quince—as crusty an old cake as ever was fired in the oven of social life—had, on Barnaby's resumption of the pestle and mortar, offered him his daughter's hand, his shop and business.—This puts the favoured youth to his wit's end. To own his marriage, would be tantamount to a kicking out of doors—to conceal it, is the impossible thing;—for Mrs. Buckthorn is not only an inveterately punctual correspondent, but a cross-grained lady, who always seats herself on the cross-benches when any domestic bill is brought in by the head of the family. Of the etchings of his wife's nails, Barnaby's physiognomy has occasionally exhibited proof impressions;—the constant fear of discovery, therefore, keeps him on the parched-pea-on-a-shovel movement from morning till night; which is aggravated by the prying curiosity of one Simon Suckling, an over-fed, pudding-crammed libel upon humanity, who would never "smell to a book, or lick any thing off one;" bulky and fat as a walrus, with two knocked-knees terminated by two unquestionable feet—out-frogging the frog in the fable, and willing to pledge his love, but finds nobody inclined to take it in. The everlasting postman has just paid Barnaby another visit; and Simon, to add to his discomfiture hands him over his lady's neck-chain from

the jeweller's. Quince gets a sly peep at the bauble, and, concluding it is intended for his daughter, insinuates that the sooner it is presented, the sooner will be inscribed over the shop-door, in gilt capitals, "BUCKTHORN, LATE QUINCE," flanked right and left by a brilliant constellation of bottles—red, blue, green, yellow, and pink! Miss Quince, whose education had been superintended by certain maiden aunts whose decorum is kept alive by strong waters and devotion, and who beg, with singular gravity and magniloquence of phrase, the Lord to stand betwixt them and the devil, when balls and other profane things are talked of,—is nevertheless not quite proof against the gay temptation of a sparkling gold neck-chain. She hesitates whether or not to take the trinket. 'Tis somewhere said,

"The fair one that deliberates is lost."

The chain had undoubtedly been lost to the lady had she longer deliberated; for Barnaby is in a month's mind to pocket it; and an arrival immediately follows that would have rendered it imperative for him so to do;—for, with a sudden bounce into the shop, rushes a rampant little vixen, with a shrill voice and an undeniable pug nose, who puts him to the tortures of the *quart d'heure* of Rabelais. 'Tis Mrs. Buckthorn—"fond Susan!" Is there no possibility of getting transported? His wife, alas! tied like a tin-canister to his tail, would chase him to the antipodes! He asks rather to be hanged. His case admits of no mitigation of punishment! She hears that Mr. Quince intends that night to do a little dancing and fiddling: she doats on a ball, and will jig with the best of them! Barnaby warns his wife not to pull down the vengeance of an apothecary — a sepulchral practitioner, looking shrouds and shovels, whose paternity might lie between a sextoness and a body-snatcher! In this dilemma, he persuades Simon to make love to Miss Quince—a task that young Bolus performs with grinning alacrity; but the lady is too sleepy to be courted: Somnus is the lover into whose arms she is ready to fall! A gentleman from London, a Mr. John Thompson—friend Thompson!—begs the favour of an interview with Barnaby Buckthorn; and while the unconscious Barnaby is puzzling his brains to divine who the said Thompson can be, the query is answered by the unceremonious entrance of a dandy of the first water, flourishing in one hand a white handkerchief, (not as a flag of

truce!) and in the other, a cane—not exactly (as Barnaby's shoulders can testify!) for ornament. The new visitor—"fond Susan" in breeches!—is invited to dance at the wedding—grill the first! The gold chain glittering round the neck of the bride elect—grill the second! 'Tis quite a love match on *both* sides—grill the third! Till Barnaby, turned and twirled round, gets moderately basted, and literally roasted alive! The visitors are ushered into the ball-room, and he is to compound the cold punch—ipecacuanha, gamboge, aloes, tartar, and jalap! His head swims—his hand shakes, and, but for the merciful interference of Mrs. Comfort, an amateur Taglioni! the vitals of the party had been drenched with a new species of *rack* punch—some bushel or two of Morrison's pills boiled down in a stew-pan! Miss Quince, heated with the ball-room, and, like the nigger who had an ague and a fever—the fever stuck to him, but the ague left him, for he was too lazy to shake;—Miss Quince prefers a snug three winks in the anti-chamber, ante the supper; and, while in this happy state of soporific anticipation, dreaming of the colossal roti, the tarts and jellies, John Thompson steals in upon tip-toe, and steals the neck-chain. The lady is startled; the house is raised; the trick discovered; all parties are restored to good humour; and Barnaby Buckthorn succeeds to the sal volatile, galls, quassia, and bitter aloes!

Mr. T. Green, a performer of whom we have before had occasion to speak in terms of praise, took a pretty considerable leap from genteel comedy to broad farce, in the character of Barnaby Buckthorn. He agreeably surprised us with his versatility; and, with his nods and winks, shuffle and cut, bustling humour, and funny face-making, emulated Mr. Harley. Mr. Green will do well to put this part into his pocket during his comic perambulations; so that, when his audience draw on him for a broad grin, he can pay them at sight. He was excellently played up to by Mrs. F. Matthews—"a very wife," a "very woman!" and a very capital representative of the pert, provoking, pug-nosed, pugnacious Mrs. Barnaby Buckthorn. The nondescript apothecary's lad, Simon, looked a right lolly-lop looney in that ludicrous compound of listlessness and lumpishness, Mr. T. F. Matthews. The piece was generally well acted, and went off with great merriment and applause.

D.——G.

Cast of the Characters,

As performed at the Queen's Theatre, February, 1837.

Mr. Quince (an Apothecary)	Mr. W. Davidge.
Barnaby Buckthorn (his Nephew and Assistant)	Mr. T. Green.
Simon Suckling (an Apprentice to Quince).....	Mr. T. F. Matthews.
Miss Sarah Quince (Daughter of Quince).....	Miss Treble.
Susan Buckthorn (Wife of Barnaby)	Mrs. F. Matthews.
Mrs. Comfort (Housekeeper to Quince).....	Mrs. Loveday.

Costume.

MR. QUINCE.—Black suit—hair powdered and tied—frilled shirt—white cravat—black silk stockings, and shoes.

BARNABY BUCKTHORN. — Dark gray coat—light blue waistcoat — tight black pantaloons — long canvass sleeves—white cotton stockings—black apron, and shoes.

SIMON SUCKLING.—Light green coat, with yellow basket buttons—white waistcoat, with broad pink stripes—short nankeen trousers—blue and white striped stockings—coloured neckerchief, and turn-down shirt-collar—long smooth hair—shoes.

MISS SARAH QUINCE. — Neat clear yellow and muslin low dress, trimmed with black—short sleeves—black lace ruffles—hair dressed and tied with light blue ribbon—white silk stockings—shoes.

SUSAN BUCKTHORN. — *First dress:* Black silk gown, with bouquet of roses—silk bonnet—long white veil —shawl — white silk stockings — shoes. *Second dress:* Fashionable dress coat—white waistcoat and trousers—hat—white silk stockings—shoes—and hand whip.

MRS. COMFORT. — Flowered muslin dress — silk bonnet.

MY FRIEND THOMPSON!

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apothecary's Shop—doors* R. *and* L. S. E. *—a window, with large coloured bottles,* C. F.*—a counter near* L. S. E., *with pestle and mortar, scales, bottles, &c. —a table near* R. S. E., *with two plaster flower-vases.*

BARNABY BUCKTHORN *discovered at the counter, pounding drugs in a mortar.*

Bar. Here have I been for the last hour rub, rub, rub—mix, mix, mix—compounding, concocting, and infusing, without thinking in the least what I have been about; my thoughts are fifty miles away from this vile thing. [*Coming forward.*] Was ever a disciple of Æsculapius placed in such a situation as I am? and all through that stupid old uncle of mine! What business had he to send me to London, I wonder?—Or, rather, what business had I, when I got there, to make such a fool of myself as to fall in love, and with a milliner, too? But, somehow or another, I think I was caught in a trap. I never dreamed about marriage until her brother, a fellow six feet four without his shoes, swore by all that was horrible, that if I played the fool with his sister, he'd make mince meat of me.—Oh, lord! how he did swear and bounce about!—And then he looked bigger than ever. So, in order to pacify him, I consented to become the husband of his sister, and we were married. [*Sighing.*] Oh, dear! But, no—I do not regret it; for Susan is very pretty and very good-tempered; that it, rather good-tempered—when she's pleased. Some time after my marriage, I came back to Canterbury. I then determined to inform my uncle of what had taken place; but whilst I was waiting for a favourable opportunity, he spoiled all my plans by offering me the hand of his daughter, and to give up the shop and business to me. To the shop and business I have no objection—none in

the world; but for the daughter—there's the rub! A wife is no joke to a man who has got one already. A pretty mess I'm in, truly! Beggary on the one hand, and bigamy on the other! Oh! why did I ever go to London? [*Listening.*] Eh! who's coming? Oh, it's Suckling, my uncle's apprentice;—a nice article he is, too!

Enter SIMON SUCKLING, *with a letter*, R. S. E.

Well, what brings you here now?

Sim. Why, many things, Mr. Barnaby. First, here's a letter for you.

Bar. A letter for me?

Sim. Yes; and, look, here's the London post-mark.

Bar. [*Taking the letter.*] Well, what of that? [*Aside.*] It's Susan's handwriting, sure enough.

Sim. (R. C.) You seem to have a great many friends in London, Mr. Barnaby, considering how short a time you stopped there.

Bar. (C.) Oh, yes, a great many. [*Aside.*] The prying animal! [*Giving him a bottle of medicine.*] But here's a draught you must take this instant for Mrs.—Mrs.—what's her name? You know who I mean—Mrs. Neverwell, the fat old lady over the way, that's got dyspepsia.

Sim. Ugh!—I get nothing but running about all day. I came here to learn chymistry, and the other branches of the profession, and not to run about like a twopenny postman. But I won't submit to it any longer—I want to be advanced. When am I to prepare the prescriptions, and do up the draughts and things, I want to know?

Bar. Ah, I see you want to learn the art of mixing and making up the prescriptions—eh? Well, well; all in good time—all in good time, Simon.

Sim. Yes, so you've said a hundred times before;—but you must admit it's very vexatious: for, two years ago, when Miss Sarah was staying with her father, she saw me peeling bitter almonds; and yesterday, when she came back again, she found me peeling sweet almonds.

Bar. Well, at any rate, according to your own showing, you have advanced from bitter to sweet: what more do you want?

Sim. Want!—What must Miss Susan think of my doing nothing but peeling,—peel, peel, peel,—always peeling?

Bar. Why, that you are a staunch re-pealer, to be sure.

Sim. By the by, have you remarked how very sedate

she seems since her return home? She usedn't to be so at one time.

Bar. Not I; what is it to me? I've something else to think of.

Sim. Why, now, I should say, it is a great deal to you, at least, it ought to be, considering you're to be her husband.

Bar. That's as it may be; but it's no concern of yours, my fine fellow, that's certain.

Sim. Don't you think she is very pretty, though?—Such eyes—such hair—such a mouth—such a complexion!

Bar. [*Mimicing.*] Such eyes—such hair—such a mouth!

Sim. Come, Mr. Barnaby, I don't like that; you are laughing at me. But never mind; I know something about you.

Bar. Pooh! you know nothing about me, you booby!

Sim. Don't I, though? Who are those letters to, that you write of a night in your bed-room, when you think everybody else is asleep?

Bar. [*Alarmed.*] Letters!—Don't speak so loud, Mr. Suckling; do you think I'm deaf?

Sim. Then there's the old woman who came to you the other day, and said it was such a beautiful baby, [*Imitating nursing a child.*] just like you, the little dear!

Bar. [*Confused.*] The baby! Why—oh! the baby! It's a little nephew of mine—'pon my honour, a nephew, Mr. Suckling.

Sim. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha! Of course, your little nephew. Why, you have neither brother nor sister.

Bar. Now, Suckling, don't speak so loud: do you want all the house to hear you? Come, if you'll promise not to say a word about it, I'll tell you what I'll do.

Sim. You will? Let's hear your terms, Mr. Barnaby.

Bar. You shall begin directly with the prescriptions—will that satisfy you? Then you shall make up the pills, and learn the compounds afterwards.

Sim. Then I promise you I'll never disclose a syllable to any living being about—[*Imitating nursing a child.*]—not even to your wife—that is to be.

Bar. Faithfully, then, you promise?

Sim. [*Laying his hand on his breast.*] Honour!

Enter MR. QUINCE, R. D.

Quince. (C.) What! both here together, gossipping, and nobody minding the shop? Come, come—this won't do.

Bar. [*Aside*, L, *concealing the letter.*] Here's another botheration !—When shall I be able to read my letter ?

Sim. (R.) [*To Quince.*] I'm going over the way with the draughts to Mrs. Neverwell. [*Crossing to Barnaby.*] But, bless me ! how stupid I am !—I had almost forgotten. Here's your neckchain, Barnaby, just come home from the jeweller's. [*Gives it to him.*

Bar. [*Aside, putting the chain hastily into his pocket.*] Before my uncle—the booby ! 'Tis my wife's chain that she sent me to get altered by the person I bought it of, as if she couldn't get it done better in London.

Quince. [*To Simon.*] Come, make haste and run with your draughts, and then you can prepare your infusions for to-morrow.

Sim. Yes, sir. [*Going off, grumbling.*] I hate their infusions and confusions !—I've nothing else to do but running about. [*Whispering to Barnaby.*] I say—mum !—not a word about the little un ! [*Exit*, R. U. E.

Quince. Eh ? what does he say ?

Bar. That he'll attend to the little infusions when he comes back.

Quince. That's right, Barnaby ; keep your eye upon business : these little matters must be attended to. But, I say, what necklace was that you put in your pocket just now—that which Suckling gave you ?

Bar. [*Embarrassed.*] Necklace !—What necklace ?—Mr. Suckling gave me no necklace. It's a mistake !

Quince. Why, the one you put in this pocket just now.

Bar. Oh—ah—yes, I remember now. You said a necklace—you meant a neckchain. Oh, yes ; I believe I did put a neckchain there—such a pretty one ! [*Drawing it reluctantly from his pocket.*] But I can't say who it's for.

Quince. [*Taking it from him.*] A secret, Barnaby, and from me, your uncle ? [*Examining the neckchain.*] Eh ! what do I see ?—An initial !—You're a sad fellow, Barnaby, to employ such means to make yourself agreeable with the women ;—it's too bad of you !

Bar. [*Aside.*] Can he suspect anything, I wonder ?

Quince. Now, I might reproach you with the concealment ; but I know your intentions are honourable ;—you have my sanction and approbation ; and I see with pleasure these little delicate attentions to gain my daughter's love—it's all very proper.

[*Gives the chain to Barnaby, who puts it into his pocket.*

Bar. [*Aside.*] Indeed!—Then he's out for once in his life!

Quince. She is deserving your affections, the dear child! You know what pains I have bestowed upon her education, and that I have placed her with two maiden aunts, of the most severe and rigid principles—principles well calculated to form a woman's mind; more strict, perhaps, than I would have wished altogether, for they have made her afraid to look a man in the face. Yesterday she was fearful to embrace even me.

Bar. [*Aside.*] Morality with a vengeance!

Quince. Sarah, said I, remember I am your father; but she still seemed alarmed. However, notwithstanding her timidity, you can make her your little present, you know; it will flatter her, and induce her think favourably of you.

Bar. Oh, yes, certainly, uncle—with pleasure. [*Aside.*] The deuce take her and the chain together!

Quince. Ah! Barnaby, what a wife you will have, particularly when she gets a little more familiarized with the world! and such an establishment—the best business in Canterbury! Fancy your name in large gold letters over the door—"BUCKTHORN, LATE QUINCE!"—and the brilliant rows of bottles—red, blue, green, yellow, pink—and all the monstrosities to catch attention! Ah! Barnaby, you will be in the high road to advancement—every thing before you; and as my daughter has just arrived here to live with us, I mean to give a little, quiet party to-night, and you can take advantage of the circumstance to pay her those little attentions women think so much of. Eh? what do you say, Barnaby?

Bar. Oh, a most excellent plan, sir—capital, indeed! [*Aside.*] I wish every thing but success to it!

Quince. But here comes the dear child. Now, Barnaby, for your gallantry. Here's an opportunity for showing off! Where's the chain? Have it ready, my boy!

Bar. [*Aside.*] He's determined to have the chain, whether I will or no. Oh, that I could but snatch an instant to read Susan's letter! What can she have to say, I wonder?

Enter SARAH QUINCE *and* MRS. COMFORT, R.

Mrs. C. (C.) Come, Miss Sarah, you need not be afraid now; there's nothing to alarm you—nothing at all.

Quince. (R. C.) No, no. Surely you are not afraid of your father, my dear?

Sar. (R.) [*Hesitatingly.*] I was afraid of annoying you, sir—that I should be troublesome; and, besides, you are not alone.

Quince. But you needn't look so melancholy to-day: yesterday it was all very well; you had just left your aunt's, and it was natural; but now it's quite another thing. Come, look happy. What the deuce——

Sar. [*Screaming.*] Oh!

Quince. What's the matter, eh?—What the deuce is the matter?

Sar. You make use of such horrid words, father.

Quince. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha! I only said the deuce; you'll soon get accustomed to that.

Sar. Oh no, I hope not. I shall regret I left my aunts, where everything was so exemplary, and far removed from the contamination of society——

Bar. [*Aside.*] Oh lud! here's a treat!

Sar. Whilst with you, papa—thrown into the midst of the world and its seductions, what will become of me?—How shall I avoid the stratagems of iniquity, and the wickedness of men?

Bar. [*Aside.*] A nice child this, indeed! The aunts have brought her up to some purpose.

Mrs. C. [*To Quince.*] You must excuse her, sir; she didn't sleep well last night, poor thing; something alarmed her.

Quince. Oh, something alarmed her, did it? [*To Sarah.*] What was it, my dear?

Mrs. C. Why, it was only——

Sar. Silence, Mrs. Comfort, I beg. How can you talk so before men? Have you no sense of delicacy or propriety?

Mrs. C. La, bless the child! it was nothing in the world but——

Sar. Mrs. Comfort, I insist upon you holding your tongue; I will not permit you to go on so.

Mrs. C. Oh, well, if I must, I must;—but did ever any one hear such nonsense as this? Pshaw!

[*Exit in a passion,* R. U. E.

Quince. Never mind—it's no matter, I dare say. But you are not dressed for the ball.

Sar. No, papa; and if it's the same to you, I'd rather not be there.

Quince. Eh? not be there! Why, what's the meaning of this?

Sar. My aunts say, that balls are very bad things for young ladies, and that improper acquaintances are made at them. Indeed, papa, they often caution me against attending such places.

Quince. Nonsense, child; you must learn to think otherwise, or people will laugh at you.

Bar. [*Aside.*] And with good reason, too. But it's lucky for me they have forgotten the chain.

Quince. And you must conform to the customs of society, and give up all these absurd notions, particularly now you are about to be married.

Sar. [*Alarmed.*] Married!

Quince. Yes: Barnaby is all impatience, I can assure you. You haven't seen him for a long time: don't you think he's much improved?

[*Barnaby arranges himself for admiration.*

Sar. [*Casting a glance at him.*] No, papa—not at all.

Bar. [*Aside*, L.] She speaks her mind, at any rate; but what can be expected from the taste of one so brought up? She has no judgment.

Quince. What, you don't like him?

Sar. [*Indifferently.*] No, papa—not much.

Quince. Why not?—What's amiss with him?—I can't see any fault.

Sar. [*Looking on the ground.*] He squints, papa.

Bar. [*Aside.*] The deuce I do!

Quince. Lord bless me! why, it's hardly perceptible. Let's look at you, Barnaby. Well, I can't see it.

Bar. [*Piqued.*] She's no judge;—besides, a gentleman ought always to squint a little; it gives expression to the countenance, and is something out of the common way.

Quince. Well, Barnaby, now's your time——

Bar. My time for what?

Quince. To make her your little present. Call in the assistance of art to second the impression you have made. Come, come—art and nature together!

Bar. [*Aside.*] I suppose I must, if I must. The deuce take them! [*Crossing to Sarah*, R., *and presenting the chain.*] Cousin, allow me to request you will do me the honour to accept this trifling mark of esteem, from one who is desirous of your good opinion.

Sar. [*Hesitating.*] I don't think I ought.

Bar. Oh, yes, pray accept it—[*Putting it into his pocket.*]—pray do!

Quince. Take it, Sarah—take it; you have my consent.

Bar. [*Giving it.*] You may rest assured, that, without your father's consent, I never should have thought of offering it to you. [*Aside.*] And that you would never have set your eyes on it.

Sar. (R.) Oh, look, papa—isn't it very pretty? And, I declare, here's my initial! Well, this is very good of Barnaby.

Quince. (R. C.) [*Examining the chain.*] So it has, I declare! S isn't it, my dear?

Sar. Yes, papa; S for Sarah.

Bar. (L. C.) [*Aside.*] More like S for Susan, I should think. S don't always mean Sarah.

Quince. Now, then, let us arrange every thing for the party. Come, Sarah, get yourself ready.

Sar. Then you wish that I should be there, father?

Quince. To be sure I do! Our neighbours and friends are invited, and I want you to make an impression upon them. Besides, these parties bring grist to the mill in more ways than one: your visitors feel bound to deal with you, and we generally find that the extra expenses of the entertainment are more than paid by the extra quantity of medicine we sell; for people who frequently go to parties are great friends to the doctors. But come, my dear; we must away. [*Exeunt Mr. Quince and Sarah,* R.

Bar. Alone at last! Now, then, for my wife's letter. Ha! should she have written to me for her chain, and I not able to send it, she's so impatient, that she'll pester me with letter after letter. Then she never thinks of paying the postage; and these eightpences tell up in time.—Well, let's see what she has to say. [*Opening the letter, and reading.*] "*London, January 10th.*"—Why, that was yesterday.—"*Sir,*"—short and sweet—shows that she wasn't in the best temper when she wrote:—"*I don't at all understand your atrocious conduct;—your letters cause me the most horrible suspicions. Monster! if you dare to deceive me!—I am so troubled with the dreadful thought, that I cannot sleep night or day; and I must at once put an end to this anxiety. I shall leave London on the 11th, by the Express for Canterbury, and arrive at seven o'clock in the evening. Meet me at the coach-office—you know I hate waiting; and I must have somebody to carry my things.—Your fond* SUSAN." Seven o'clock—

and it's now eight! A pretty humour she'll be in! But what, in the name of all ill-luck, can she want here? No matter; I must go and prevent her coming to my uncle's, or I am ruined. What a precious mess I'm in, to be sure!

Susan. [*Without*, R. U. E.] Oh, very well; if he's there, I'll go to him. This way? Thank you, sir.

Bar. By all that's horrible, that's her voice!

Enter SUSAN BUCKTHORN, R. U. E.

Sus. [*Tapping him on the shoulder, and endeavouring to suppress her passion.*] And so, sir, I find you here doing nothing, whilst you leave me to amuse myself for an hour in the coach-office, to the delight of the porters and coachmen! Pray, sir, what do you mean by it?

Bar. My dearest Susan, I was coming this very instant. But let me press you in my arms.

Sus. [*Pushing him away.*] You need not trouble yourself, sir; you don't seem inclined to put yourself out of the way.

Bar. [*Submissively.*] But, Susan, it was no fault of mine that you and your letter arrived together. You came, like a lawyer's letter and a writ, so sharp upon each other, that a fellow hardly knows which he gets first—the gentle tap on the shoulder, or the tender billy-ducks.

Sus. [*Bursting with passion.*] And a pretty reception you give me truly, Mr. Barnaby Buckthorn! I know not what restrains me——But, sir—you see how calm I am—how very calm! I wonder, indeed, at my own calmness; but you know my meek and gentle disposition.

Bar. [*Confused.*] Yes, yes; but you place me in such a very perplexing situation. What in the world brought you to Canterbury, I wonder?

Sus. I came, sir, to confess all to your uncle. Am I not your wife? answer me that. And he shall know it, too, I am determined, and this very day, sir — this very hour!

Bar. But consider, Susan, if you tell my uncle, he will turn me out of doors; and you know I am to succeed him in the business. Wait till then, and——

Sus. [*Enraged.*] No, sir, I will not wait! You are a monster—a villain—a perfidious, deceitful wretch! But I wonder I have patience to restrain myself. Guilty as you are, would you abandon to poverty your poor, patient, injured, innocent, and confiding wife?

Bar. Hush, my dear! In the name of every thing sacred, don't speak so loudly of our marriage—of our love for each other—[*Aside.*]—ahem! [*To her.*] Let me implore you to consider what you are about. This is no place for you; London is your home, and the best place by far for you—much better than Canterbury. Canterbury's a very bilious place.

Sus. But I chuse to remain at Canterbury, and that is enough for me. Besides, I'm not inclined to be bilious.

Bar. [*Angrily.*] Then I say, you shall not remain here, and for once in my life I will be the master!

Sus. [*Endeavouring to curb her passion.*] Very well, sir—very well! You will use violence—do so, pray; I wish for nothing better;—that will be something for the people in the house to wonder at—an unnatural brute of a husband using violence to his much-injured, unoffending wife! You'll use violence, sir, will you? You'll use violence?

Bar. Yes! [*Aside.*] If any one should come in now, a pretty figure I should cut indeed! Why the devil did I ever go to London? [*Turning to her.*] Now, Susan, do be reasonable for once in your life, if you can, and go to a hotel—now do, there's a darling!

Sus. [*Passionately.*] No, I will not!

Bar. I will come to you presently, love. You see, there's to be a little ball here to-night, and I'll contrive to slip away, dearest, while they are dancing.

Sus. Oh, there's to be a little ball to-night, is there? And so, while you are amusing yourself here, I am to be sitting alone in the hotel? No, no, Mr. Buckthorn—no such thing, I assure you! I shall remain where I am! You know I love a ball to distraction; and you used to say, that, if I had had more practice, I could dance like a second Taglioni! I'll go to this ball myself, and if any thing happens, I'll declare who I am—that's what I will!

Bar. [*Despairingly.*] Say who you are! Susan, Susan! how can you imagine anything so atrocious? Oh! if my uncle should learn what has taken place!—Alas! you know not, my dear, what it is to bring down the vengeance of an Apothecary!

Sus. What is it to me, sir? I wish to dance, and dance I will, in despite of all the Surgeons and Apothecaries in Canterbury!

Bar. [*Aside.*] How shall I be able to get out of this scrape? [*Aloud.*] Susan, since nothing can move your ob-

stinate determination, grant me at least one request. If you stay here, we shall be seen. [*Crossing to the door*, L.] This is my room; you can at all events remain in it for a short time—[*Aside.*] and meanwhile I may contrive some scheme to get rid of her.

Sus. You know I never refuse you anything in reason; but is your room nicely in order?—well dusted? Mind you don't keep me long by myself—I hate to be alone. [*Threatening.*] If you do, sir, mind!

Bar. No, no, dearest—not an instant longer than I can help;—the moment I am at liberty, I'll fly to you. [*Opening the door*, L. S. E.] This way—there!

Sus. I'm afraid you'll be at your tricks again; but have a care, Mr. Barnaby Buckthorn—have a care!

[*Exit into the room*, L. S. E.

Enter SIMON SUCKLING, *peeping in at the door*, R. S. E., *and catching a glimpse of Susan.*

Sim. Hollo! Barnaby!

Bar. [*Surprised.*] What, Simon! [*Calling after Susan.*] Don't be alarmed, madam; apply the fomentations every five minutes as hot as he can bear them, until the swelling subsides.

Sim. [*Archly.*] Eh! Master Barnaby! who's that?—Didn't I see a female woman?

Bar. [*Stammering.*] Yes, yes—some one whose husband has met with a sudden accident—a—a—a something,—broken his neck, or sprained his leg. He's at this moment in great pain, and his wife, you see, is attending him.

Sim. [*Ironically.*] Oh, his wife is attending him, eh?

Bar. And you know there's nothing like the attention of a wife; the dear creatures are so soothing—so amiable—so attentive—[*Aside.*] rather too much so, sometimes! [*Aloud.*] They are such kind, pretty creatures—so——

Sim. Ah, true—very true. Isn't Miss Sarah very pretty? Oh! such expression!

Bar. Very pretty. I must agree with you—very!

Sim. You'll be a happy man, Mr. Barnaby, with such a wife and such a business. [*Sighing.*] Ah, me! I shall never get married.

Bar. [*Looking towards the door*, L. S. E.] You may depend upon it, a bachelor's life is the happiest after all.

Sim. [*Sighing.*] Ah! Mr. Barnaby!

Bar. Bless me, Mr. Suckling! you're in love!

Sim. What, I? Lord bless you, Mr. Barnaby!

Bar. Yes, I am certain of it; I can see it in your eyes.

Sim. But which eye? No, no—impossible!

Bar. Both eyes. I'm convinced of it, and with my pretty cousin, too, Miss Sarah.

Sim. Do you think so?

Bar. Nothing more certain. Now you know it!

Sim. I begin to think so myself. Oh, yes! I am in love!

Bar. I know what a concealed passion is, Mr. Simon Suckling; and, as your friend, I would not see you thus a prey to such anxiety. Do not consider me as a rival; strive to make yourself agreeable to my cousin; and so far from being angry, I shall consider that you have conferred upon me an obligation.

Sim. Mr. Barnaby, you surprise me!

Bar. You will confer an obligation on me I shall never forget:—I say again, it will be an obligation to me.

Sim. My dear sir! But, then, her uncle——

Bar. Oh, he'll change his opinion; he's used to it—it's part of his profession. [*Looking off*, R.] But here, just in time, comes the object of your adoration. I'll step out for a few moments, and leave you together. [*A bell rings.*] Botheration! there's somebody wants me. [*Calling off.*] Very well—very well! [*Aside.*] Here's a comfortable situation I'm in! My uncle on one side, my wife on the other, and my intended here! I wish myself well out of this delicate dilemma! [*The bell rings violently.*] Well, well, I'm coming! Can't you have patience? [*Exit*, R.

Enter SARAH QUINCE *and* MRS. COMFORT, L.

Sim. [*Aside*, R.] Here she is—how very pretty!

Mrs. C. Come along, miss, and show your father how nice your dress looks. [*Prying about.*] Why, he's not here; but, la! Mr. Suckling is ready dressed, I do declare.

Sim. [*Aside.*] I hardly dare speak to her, notwithstanding Mr. Barnaby has consented. [*Crossing to* L. C.] Miss Sarah, allow me to say, your dress is very becoming—you look so handsome in it.

Sar. (L.) Mr. Suckling, you're a flatterer. I don't like flattery; my aunts say flattery is dangerous.

Sim. Oh, yes—flattery is, certainly; but I only spoke the truth. I am sure you will be the belle of the ball-room to-night. Might I be bold enough to request your hand for the first quadrille?

Sar. Do you think it would be wrong to promise him, Mrs. Comfort?

Mrs. C. Oh, certainly not. [*Aside.*] Such a Guy!

Sar. Then I shall be most happy, Mr. Suckling——

Sim. And I—shall be the happiest man alive

[*Exit, quickly,* L., *kissing his hand to Sarah.*

Sar. [*Alarmed.*] Oh, dear!

Mrs. C. Eh! what's the matter now?

Sar. Ah! you see, Mrs. Comfort, to what I am exposed. My aunts said right when they told me men were deceitful.

Mrs. C. Nay, Mr. Suckling is a little gay and free, but I don't think he's deceitful.

Sar. Perhaps not, for I'm less afraid of him than others of his sex.

Mrs. C. Oh, but you must cease to be afraid of any of them.

Sar. Never!—If you knew the whole story about Miss Flighty, you wouldn't wish me to do so.

Mrs. C. Yes, my dear, you have informed me there was a young lady on a visit at your aunts', who was extremely pale and looked unhappy, but you never told me the cause of her unhappiness.

Sar. [*Sighing.*] A young man!

Mrs. C. Oh, very probable—nothing more likely.

Sar. Yes, but a very nice young man: he met her and danced with her at a ball, and kept his eyes fixed upon her the whole evening. So, you see, balls are very dangerous things.

Mrs. C. Ah! young women now are very different from what they were in my youthful days.

Sar. But, tell me, Mrs. Comfort, if a young man was to behave so to you, what would you do?

Mrs. C. Lord bless me, I hardly know. I suppose I should take no notice of him, and dance away without minding it. At your age, how I used to dance, good lord!

Sar. Oh, Mrs. Comfort! what expressions you use!—But don't teaze me any more about this ball; I'm sure no good will come to me from it; and, besides, I'm so sleepy, I can scarcely keep my eyes open. I did not sleep a wink last night.

Mrs. C. The noise of the music will soon arouse you; so cheer up, for if you look sleepy during the evening, what will your father say? And here he comes. Now, miss, endeavour to appear as lively and as agreeable as I am. [*Exit, dancing off,* R.

Enter MR. QUINCE *and* BARNABY, R.

Quince. (R. C.) Well, Barnaby, Simon may close the shop for the evening;—it's rather early, to be sure, but never mind—we don't have a party very often;—and I think 'tis time you were dressed. So, bustle!

Bar. I sha'n't be a moment, uncle. [*Aside, going.*] How shall I prevent this obstinate woman from coming to the ball? I'll tell her it's postponed on account of somebody's being ill—some one has got the influenza.

[*Exit into the room,* L. S. E.

Quince. Ah, Sarah! dressed as I wished you, and determined to do the honours of the evening! Well, that's a good girl.

Sar. Yes, papa; but it was only because you wished it.

Quince. And you are to open the ball with your cousin.

Sar. No, papa; I've promised Mr. Suckling.

Quince. Then Barnaby, poor fellow, will be very much annoyed: you shouldn't have given your promise to Suckling.

Enter BARNABY, *in alarm, from the room,* L. S. E.

Bar. What's the meaning of this? — Where is she?—Not in my room!—What can she have done?—Where the deuce has she got to?—She's not here! Oh, lord! here's a pretty business!

Enter SIMON, R. U. E.

Sim. Mr. Barnaby, there's a gentleman without wishes to speak with you.

Bar. To me?

Sim. Yes: he says he is a most particular friend of yours; that you knew him in London, and his name is Thompson—John Thompson.

Bar. Thompson—Thompson! John Thompson! Let me see: do I know any body of the name of Thompson? No—I never knew such a name in my life; it's such an uncommon name!

Quince. Oh, ask him in, by all means, if he's a friend of Barnaby's.

Sim. [*Speaking off,* R. U. E.] Will you walk in this way, if you please, sir? Mr. John Thompson, walk up!

Enter SUSAN *in male attire,* R. U. E., *flourishing a white handkerchief.*

Bar. [*Aside.*] My wife, as I'm alive! and with my best suit on! Was there ever such a vixen?

Quince. (R. C.) I believe, sir, you are a friend of my nephew?

Sus. [*Coming forward*, C.] I am, sir—for a long time, his very intimate friend. [*Conceitedly.*] How d'ye do, Barnaby? how are you?—Ar'n't you glad to see me?—I told you I'd come some day, so here I am.

Bar. (L.) [*Forcing a smile, and shaking hands.*] How d'ye do, Simpson—Johnson—Thompson? how d'ye do?

Sus. You didn't expect me—did you? It's an agreeable surprise to you.

Bar. No, indeed, I did not. [*Apart to her.*] Oh, you perverse, obstinate woman! do you want to be the ruin of me? But I'll be revenged!

Quince. [*To Susan.*] Well, sir, I am glad to see you—very glad. We have a little party here this evening, and shall be happy if you will join us. We want some young men, and there are plenty of pretty girls; so that we shall have a pleasant evening of it.

Bar. [*Aside.*] A young man! take my wife for a young man! What next, I wonder? My uncle surely must be blind!

Quince. And if you stop long in Canterbury, I hope you'll be present at your friend Barnaby's wedding.

Sus. [*Surprised.*] His wedding! [*Looking at Barnaby.*] *His* wedding! [*Giggling.*] Eh! eh! eh!

Bar. [*Aside.*] What the deuce made him speak of that? as if I was not enough in the mess without it!

Sus. And so, Master Barnaby, you're going to be married, and have never told me anything about it—me, of all the people in the world!

Bar. No, Tompkins, no; I never told you about it, because—because—I didn't think it worth while to tell you. [*Aside.*] Oh! I'm in a high fever—I'm roasted alive—done brown!

[*Feels his pulse, goes up to the counter, tries to swallow a pill, and walks about in agitation.*

Quince. [*To Susan.*] Yes, he's going to marry his cousin, my daughter here;—they'll be very happy together, I'm sure.

Sus. Oh, this is the young lady! [*Aside.*] What do I see?—'Tis a great resemblance. Can it be?—Yes, 'tis my neckchain! Surely, Barnaby has not dared to give it to her?

Sar. [*Aside.*] How he looks at me! What wicked creatures these men are! They are all alike.

Quince. [*To Susan.*] Quite a love-match on both sides, I assure you. Barnaby is almost crazy about it—can hardly wait.

Sus. Indeed!—It seems very strange to me! I should never have thought of Barnaby's getting married; for in London he was the most riotous profligate of any of us. You surely must have heard of his tricks: he was a very devil among the girls! But I'll say no more, for he is my friend;—yet his conduct was atrocious—horrible——

Quince. [*Astonished.*] Horrible?

Sus. Frightful!

Quince. Frightful?

Sus. Infamous!

Quince. Infamous?—Impossible!—No, no! Barnaby couldn't be so bad, neither.

Sus. And, besides, he had an affair with a young lady, that made a great deal of noise. Oh! if you did but know what I do! Poor young lady, I pity her!

Quince. Dear me! I never heard a syllable of this before: I took him for morality itself. Oh, Barnaby! Barnaby!

Bar. [*Advancing from the counter.*] An affair with a young lady! Oh! it was only a little faux-pas with a trumpery milliner—a girl of no consequence!

Sus. [*Running up to Barnaby.*] I'm in a rage, sir!—I can bear it no longer! A trumpery milliner—a girl of no consequence! It's a falsehood, sir; and you are a base, dissimulating, deceitful hypocrite—that's what you are, sir! and if it were not for the respect due to the gentleman of the house, [*Shaking him.*] I'd—I'd——

Bar. [*Raising his voice.*] Come, come, Mr.—Mr. Tomkins! if you want to insult me, you've only to say so: I'm not going to stand your nonsense, I can tell you! So follow me, sir—follow me! [*Aside.*] Oh! if I can only get her out of the room! [*Aloud.*] Come out, you Tomkins!

[*He goes towards the door,* L. S. E., *and motions Susan to follow him—she is about to cross, when Quince draws her back.*

Sar. [*In alarm.*] What will they do? They mustn't fight.

Quince. [*Getting between them.*] Gentlemen—gentlemen!—What, quarrelling in my house! and you such friends, too!—Fie! fie!—What matters a few little indiscretions?—Before marriage, it's of no consequence.

Sus. It matters a great deal, sir.

Bar. [*To Susan.*] Very well, sir; another time we'll settle this dispute.

Quince. Ah! luckily, here come the visitors. Now, Barnaby, go you and help Mrs. Comfort to make the punch, and the lemonade, and the sweet things, because you can do it so nicely.

Bar. Very well, uncle. [*Aside.*] Why did I ever go to London!

Enter Visitors, R. U. E. — *they are received by Quince.— Exeunt all but Barnaby,* L.

Bar. Did ever any one see such a provoking woman as this—to come all the way from London to spy upon my actions, and steal my best clothes—the very suit my uncle gave me! Egad! it's very lucky he never recognised them! [*Looking off* L. *into the ball-room.*] There they are, amusing themselves eating tarts and jellies, whilst I am despairing here, with a full heart and an empty stomach! [*Music heard without,* L.] Ah! they are going to begin a quadrille. What do I see? My wife speaking to my cousin—asking her to dance, no doubt! Oh, distraction! 'Tis a slow match and gunpowder—potassium and water! I must—I must cut off the communication, prevent an explosion, and escape a blowing up!

[*Rushing off to the ball-room,* L.

Enter MRS. COMFORT, *hastily,* L., *stopping him.*

Mrs. C. Why, Barnaby, you've forgotten the punch.

Bar. Oh, true; I forget everything now. [*Taking a bottle from the counter.*] Come along; let us make haste.

Mrs. C. [*Detaining him, and examining the bottle.*] Why, bless me, Mr. Barnaby, I declare if you haven't got the ipecacuanha! Lud! lud! what an accident might have happened, if I hadn't been by! Well, only to think of it!

Bar. [*Groaning.*] Oh!—You see, Mrs. Comfort, I am quite bewildered. I've lost my recollection—my best suit of clothes—my every thing! The wisest of men are sometimes confounded; but no matter. [*Taking another bottle.*] Let us have the right one this time. Here's the cold punch! I should have astonished the company had I ipecacuanha'd them! [*Exit,* R.

Mrs. C. Poor Mr. Barnaby! what can be the matter

with him? He seems altogether in confusion and excitement, as if every thing went wrong with him.

Enter SARAH QUINCE, L.

La, miss! what's the matter?

Sar. The heat of the room is so overpowering, that I cannot remain in it; besides, I am really tired and worn out. I never saw any thing like the young men, Mrs. Comfort; they quite stare one out of countenance; it's very disagreeable and extremely rude of them to do so.—[*Yawning.*] I'd much rather retire to rest, than stay dancing here all night; but, however, I will remain until the quadrille is finished.

Mrs. C. Yes, do, miss; it will revive you. [*Handing an arm-chair.*] There—sit down; I'll go and help Mr. Barnaby to make the punch. [*Exit*, R.

Sar. [*Sitting*, C.] What did that young gentleman, Mr. Barnaby's friend, want to say to me, I wonder?—What expression there is in his eyes! and how he fixed them on me! I don't think he looks half so bad as any of the rest; at any rate, I am not at all alarmed at him.

[*Lays her head upon her hand sleepily.*

Enter SUSAN *from the ball-room*, L.

Sus. It's very odd my husband don't join the company. What can be the reason of it? And the little cousin, too, has slipped out of the room! This looks very suspicious: perhaps they have arranged to meet each other. Oh, Barnaby! Barnaby! if I only discover you at your wicked tricks——But let me be prudent. [*Observing Sarah.*] Ha! what do I see?—Asleep, too!—She is really very pretty, I must confess; but now's the time for me to see if that is really my chain or not. [*Approaching Sarah gently.*] As I live, 'tis my chain—my very initial and all! Oh, the villain!—But I shall just take my own property wherever I find it, without asking any body's leave.

[*She takes the chain off Sarah, and puts it round her own neck.*

Sar. [*Starting up.*] Heavens! what do I see? A young man! Mr. Barnaby's friend! and I here alone in such a situation!

Sus. [*Sternly.*] Be silent, miss, will you?

Sar. No, indeed, I will not. [*Calling.*] Papa! papa! Help! help!

Sus. Oh! the little stupid animal! [*Exit, quickly*, R.

Enter QUINCE, SUCKLING, MRS. COMFORT, *and Visitors, from the ball-room, hastily, in alarm,* L.

Quince. Eh! eh!—What's the matter?—What's the reason of your crying out so, eh?—What now?

Sar. Oh, papa! [*Stammering.*] A young man—here—Oh!——

Quince. Well—well?

Sar. [*Hesitating.*] No, I can't tell you—I can't indeed!

Quince. Oh, dear! oh, dear! you quite alarm me!—What is it?—Who is he?—Where is he?

Sar. It's Mr. Barnaby's friend, papa. Oh, dear! oh, dear! oh, dear!

Mrs. C. La, sir! there can't be anything the matter, for it was only a minute or two ago I left her myself.—She's been dreaming, I'm sure.

Quince. Come, come, tell me all about it, Sarah.

Sar. Oh, papa!—My chain—he's stolen my chain!

Quince. What! stolen your chain? The man's a thief!

Sim. [*Bawling.*] Thieves! thieves!

Enter BARNABY, *hastily,* R

Bar. Don't make such a bellowing, Mr. Suckling: do you want to alarm the neighbourhood? I'll be answerable for her; the chain's safe enough with her, I'll warrant.

Quince. Eh! what?—Her?—Who's her?

Bar. The person you mean;—she's in my room.

Sim. [*Crossing to* R.] Then I'll arrest her myself, and bring her forth.

Bar. [*Getting in his way.*] Excuse me, if you please; I'd rather you would not;—I've a particular reason for wishing you to leave it to me; so make yourself easy about it.

Quince. Hush!—I hear somebody on the stairs; it must be the robber! Now, Barnaby—now's your time!

Bar. [*In despair.*] Oh, that I were at the bottom of the sea, or at the top of the Monument, or anywhere but here! Why did I ever go to London?

Enter SUSAN, *with a hand-whip,* R.

Sus. [*To Barnaby.*] Well, sir, and so here you are at last!

Bar. Mr. Tomkins, this conduct——

Sus. My name is Thompson, sir, if you please—John Thompson.

Bar. [*Firmly.*] Well, then, Tom Johnson—John Thompson, I mean—this conduct is inexcusable ;—I really must say that your conduct is unparalelled, Mr. Thompson ! I must say——

Sus. [*Interrupting him.*] Well, sir, and pray what do you say ?

Bar. [*Aside.*] I must cry out the loudest. [*Passionately.*] I say, sir, your conduct is scandalous, disgraceful, disagreeable, disgusting, and in the highest degree disreputable ! [*Apart to her.*] Never mind what I say, my dear ; keep it up—keep it up ! [*Aloud.*] You must explain this conduct, sir.

Quince. Yes, yes ; explain—explain, sir, if you please !

Bar. [*Vauntingly.*] Yes, sir, you shall do so ! I insist upon an explanation before you leave this room—here, sir, before my friends !

Sus. Oh ! you want an explanation, do you ? [*Striking him with the whip.*] Take that !

Bar. Yes, I insist upon an explanation, sir !—I insist upon it !

Sus. [*Slapping his face.*] There's one for you, then !

Omnes. [*In astonishment.*] Ha !

Quince. What insolence ! Poor Barnaby ! you must not put up with that.

Bar. [*To Susan.*] Oh, very well—very well ! — Never mind ! I understand you now ! I see what you mean ! — What are your weapons, sir ?

Sus. [*Showing her hands.*] These, sir, at your service.

Bar. Sword or pistol—choose, sir ! Sword or pistol, I say !

Sar. Heavens ! what do I hear ? There'll be murder !

Bar. [*Furiously.*] Come, sir, choose your weapon, and we'll settle it at once !

[*He seizes hold of Susan, and endeavours to draw her towards the door,* L. S. E.

Sar. [*Interposing.*] Stop !—What are you going to do ? Papa, they'll fight—they'll kill each other ! It's a crime to fight—I won't allow it ! I would rather sacrifice myself !

Quince. Sacrifice yourself !—What do you mean ?

Sar. There is but one way, papa, to prevent the loss of life ; and my aunts always said we should sacrifice ourselves for the good of others ;—and rather than anything

unpleasant should take place, why—[*Hesitating.*] why, I'd marry the young gentleman instead of Barnaby.

Sus. (L. C.) [*Indignantly.*] Marry me, miss! Indeed you sha'n't!

Quince. (L.) Marry him!—What, marry Mr. Thompson?

Bar. [*Aside, laughing,* R. C.] Marry my wife! Come, that's not so bad, neither! I wish I could catch them at it! What a joke to marry my wife!

Quince. Consider what you are saying, Sarah.

Sar. Yes, papa, I do consider; and if Mr. Thompson consents, why——

Bar. Why, uncle, if Mr. Thompson does consent, it is——

Quince. All nonsense! What! give my daughter to a thief!

Sus. A thief, sir! You're out of your senses, sir!—Your age alone protects you! The chain is mine, sir—my own property; and I can prove it to all the world.

Quince. How!

Sus. You have been deceived, sir—for a long time you have been deceived; and now you shall know all.

Bar. [*Crossing to Susan.*] Mr. Thompson—sir! will you hold your tongue, sir?—I say, will you hold your tongue, sir?

Sus. No, sir, I will not! I will be heard! Know, then, most respectable apothecary, that Barnaby and I are married.

Bar. [*Aside.*] It's all over with me! Oh, woman! woman! Why did I ever go to London?

Quince. Married! [*To Barnaby, with an air of indignation.*] Barnaby! Barnaby! this is too bad of you.—Here have you been with me more than six years, and concealed from me that you were a woman!

Bar. [*Staring with surprise.*] What, I, uncle! take me for a woman—you who have seen me shave regularly three times a week, besides Sundays? [*Pointing to Susan.*] Why, I tell you, he's the woman!

Quince. How! he the woman?

Bar. Well, then, she's the woman; it's the same thing.

Sus. Yes, sir, it's I that am your niece: your scapegrace nephew (the deceitful monster!) married me in London more than a year ago. Yes, sir, I am a woman!

Quince. Give me a chair; I begin to feel very unwell. Oh, Barnaby! Barnaby! what can I think of this?

Bar. [*Aside.*] There's an end of my chance of succeeding to the business!—It's a precious stopper for my bottle!—I have lost all my sal volatile, and got nothing in return but galls, quassia, and bitter aloes! But I'll be divorced! apply to the Consistory Court, and astonish the world with Buckthorn *versus* Buckthorn!

Quince. [*To Susan.*] You the wife of my nephew! my niece!—What is to become of my daughter, then?

Sar. [*Earnestly.*] Me, papa? Why, you know, I never cared for Barnaby; I didn't want to marry him.

Bar. You're very good, cousin. But I think, uncle, I can find one who really loves your daughter, and one to whom she is not altogether averse.

Quince. Who is he?—Let us see him.

Bar. [*Pulling Suckling from the corner,* R.] Come forward, you insinuwating swine—swain, I mean! Here he is before you, uncle! He's not so bad as he looks. [*Suckling takes Sarah's hand.*

Quince. What, Simon! But how do I know but he may be a woman, too?

Sim. What! I a woman? Lord bless you! quite different!

Bar. You see they understand each other. And won't you pardon your nephew, uncle?—Won't you?

Quince. [*Enraged.*] Pardon!—No, no!—Go back to London: I'll give you money to set up in business there; anything to get rid of you and your wife. Out of my sight, both of ye!

Bar. But, uncle, will you not see my little baby?

Quince. What, a baby, too!—Is there a baby in the case?

Bar. Yes, uncle; such a nice, dear little apothecary! only three months old, and so like you!

Sar. Oh, papa! do forgive him—consider the poor little baby!

Mrs. C. Come, come, sir, don't be too hard with Mr. Barnaby; he's your nephew, you know, after all.

Quince. Ah, well, I suppose I must. Barnaby, and you, Barnaby's wife, I forgive you both. [*Shaking hands.*] There!

Bar. There's an uncle for you!—Something like an uncle!

Sim. But, Mr. Barnaby, you forget me all this time.

Bar. [*To Quince.*] Oh, sir! here's Suckling wants to get married, too!

Quince. Aye, aye, it's all in good time—next year, perhaps, when he gets a little older and wiser, if my daughter don't object.

Sar. La, papa! I don't object—why should I? I'm not at all frightened at Mr. Suckling; he's so good-tempered, and such a very nice young man!

Bar. Then now, it seems, we all understand each other. [*Advancing to the foot-lights,* C.] And if our kind visitors bestow on us their approbation, now that I am fairly before them as a married man, I shall not regret the trials I have endured for the sake of

"My Friend Thompson!"

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

SARAH. SUCKLING. SUSAN. QUINCE. MRS. COM. BARNABY.

R.] [L.

THE END.

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